

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: October 30, 2003

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KEP-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS
(DOE/EIS-0285/SA-186- Midway-Moxee No. 1 30/2 to 30/4)

TO: Tom Murphy – TFS/Bell-1
Natural Resource Specialist

Proposed Action: Vegetation Management along the Midway-Moxee No. 1 30/2 to 30/4 Transmission Line ROW. The line is a 115 kV single circuit transmission line having an easement width of 100 feet. The proposed work will be accomplished in the indicated sections of the transmission line corridor.

Location: The transmission line structures are situated in Yakima County, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Description of the Proposal: BPA proposes to clear unwanted vegetation around selected transmission line structures that may impede the operation and maintenance of the subject transmission line. All work will be in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code and BPA standards. BPA plans to conduct vegetation control with the goal of removing tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon be a hazard to the transmission line. Unfortunately, BPA's overall goal to have low-growing plant communities along the rights-of-way to control the development of potentially threatening vegetation is not an appropriate strategy for this line segment since it is in residential/rural residential areas.

Analysis: This project meets the standards and guidelines for the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Planning Steps:

1. Identify facility and the vegetation management need.

The work involved will be to clear tall growing vegetation that is currently or will soon pose a hazard to the lines and selectively eliminating tall growing vegetation *before* it reaches a height or density to begin competing with low-growing vegetation. All work will take place in existing rights-of-ways.

Also, all off right-of-way trees that are potentially unstable and will fall within a minimum distance or into the zone where the conductors swing will be removed. All work will be accomplished by manual or mechanical control methods to assure that there is little potential harm to non-target vegetation and to low-growing plants. Desirable low-growing plants will not be disturbed. The work will provide system reliability and fire protection.

The vegetation control is designed to provide a 10-year maintenance free interval.

2. *Identify surrounding land use and landowners/managers and any mitigation.*

The work site is located in residential or rural residential settings. The rural residential land types are used for intermittent grazing purposes and tree farms (i.e. walnut plantation). The types and density of trees to be removed are noted on Attachment 1, checklist. All affected land is privately owned and developed. No other agencies or Tribal involvement exists.

Landowners will be contacted if trees pose a hazard to the line. This contact will be by site visits or door hangers if no positive contact occurs. BPA will remove the trees at no expense to the landowner.

3. *Identify natural resources and any mitigation.*

T&E Species and Habitats

No known locations of T&E species or species habitats have been identified in the project area. This information was verified through a database search of Tview2.

Wetland and Surface Water Resources

No known wetland resources have been identified in the project area. This information was verified through a database search of Tview2.

An irrigation canal has been identified between transmission line structures 30/4 and 30/3. No debris will be allowed to enter the canal.

Sensitive Areas

Visually sensitive areas will not be impacted due to the low number of trees to be cut.

Cultural Resources

Ground disturbance will be minimal, so cultural resources, if present, will not be affected.

Erosion Control

Erosion potential will be minimal due to the low number of trees to be cut and the method of cutting (handheld chainsaws).

Based on this, the work will not impact any natural or cultural resources, so no mitigation will be necessary.

4. *Determine vegetation control and debris disposal methods.*

Vegetation control on all lands will be performed using manual, mechanical and stump grinding methods. No herbicides will be used due to the landowners planned subsequent use of the right-of-way.

All wood generated debris will be hauled off site to an approved disposal site.

5. *Determine revegetation methods, if necessary.*

Due to minimal soil disturbance, no seeding is planned.

6. Determine monitoring needs.

The right-of-way and structures identified in the checklist will be inspected after completion of the work to determine if all hazard trees have been removed from these areas.

7. Prepare appropriate environmental documentation.

Besides this Supplement Analysis, no other environmental documentation should be necessary.

Findings: This Supplement Analysis finds that 1) the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program FEIS (DOE/EIS-0285) and ROD, and; 2) there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

/s/ Michael A. Rosales

Michael A. Rosales
Environmental Physical Scientist

CONCUR /s/ Thomas C. McKinney
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: 11/03/2003

Attachment

cc:

L. Croff- -KEC-4
T. McKinney – KEC-4
J. Meyer – KEP-4
J. Sharpe – KEPR-4
M. Rosales – KEPR/Bell-1
P. Key – LC-7
J. Hilliard Creecy – T-DITT2
K. Rodd – TF/DOB-1
D. Labrosse – TFS/Bell-1
J. Lahti – TFS/Bell-1
M. Borrows – TFSK/Ellensburg
Environmental File – KEC (EQ-14)
Official File – KEP-4 (EQ-14)

Vegetation Management Checklist

Midway-Moxee No. 1

1. IDENTIFY FACILITY AND THE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT NEED

1.1 Describe Right-of-way.

| Corridor Name | Corridor Length & kV | Easement width | Miles of Treatment |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Midway-Moxee No. 1 | 34 mi 115Kv | 100 ft | < 0.25 miles (30/2 - 30/4) |

Right Of Way:

Individual Yard trees on and off of the right of way

1.2 Describe the vegetation needing management.

Vegetation Types:

Poplar, Chinese Elm, Walnut

1.3 List measures you will take to help promote low-growing plant communities. If promoting low-growing plants is not appropriate for this project, explain why.

Sites are in residential areas. LGPC is not an appropriate strategy.

1.4 Describe overall management scheme/schedule.

Initial entry - Identify trees that are approaching clearance zone. Notify landowner to trim. If landowner does not trim tree, it is subsequently removed.

Subsequent entry's - This maintenance activity is ongoing.

Future cycles - This maintenance cycle will occur over the next 10 years if natural regeneration occurs.

2. IDENTIFY SURROUNDING LAND USE AND LANDOWNERS/MANAGERS

2.1 List the types of landowners and land uses along your corridor.

Private property landowners.

Landowners/Managers/Uses:

Residential

Rural: horse pasture, walnut plantation

2.2 Describe method for notifying right-of-way landowners and requesting information (i.e., door hanger, letter, phone call, e-mail, and/or meeting). Develop landowner mail list, if appropriate.

Project site visit with landowners.

- 2.3 List the specific land owner/land use measures — determined from the handbook or through your consultations with the entities — that will be applied.**

BPA will remove the tree at no expense to the landowner. Items such as cleanup, wood removal and stump removal will be performed by BPA.

- 2.4 Review any existing landowner agreements (e.g. tree/brush Permits or Agreements). List in table above any provisions that need to be followed and where they are located.**

N/A

- 2.5 List any known casual informal use of the right-of-way by non-owner publics. List any constraints or measure's to take due to the informal use.**

Sites are backyards and residential area. Debris will be removed from horse pasture. No herbicide will be used due to landowners planned subsequent use of right-of-way.

- 2.6 List other potentially affected people, agencies, or tribes (that are not landowners/managers) that need to be notified or coordinated with. Describe method of notification and coordination.**

N/A

3. IDENTIFY NATURAL RESOURCES

- 3.1 List any water resources (streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands) that may be impacted by vegetation control activities. For each water body describe the control methods and requirements or mitigation measures that will be used.**

Irrigation ditch in project work site. No debris will be allowed to enter the ditch.

- 3.2 If planning to use herbicides, list locations of any known irrigation source, wells, or springs (landowners maybe able to provide this info if requested).**

N/A

- 3.3 List below the areas that have Threatened or Endangered Plant or Animal Species and the name of the species, and any special measures that need to be taken due to their presence. Attach any BAs, T&E maps, or letters from US Fish and Wildlife.**

N/A

- 3.4 List any other measures to be taken for enhancing wildlife habitat or protecting species.**

N/A

3.5 List any visually sensitive areas and the measures to be taken at these areas.

N/A

3.6 List areas with cultural resources and the measures to be taken in those areas.

N/A

3.7 List areas with steep slopes or potential erosion areas and the measure and methods to be applied in those areas.

N/A

3.8 List areas of spanned canyons and the type of cutting needed.

N/A

4. DETERMINE VEGETATION CONTROL METHODS

4.1 List Methods that will be used in areas not previously addressed in steps above.

Manual, Mechanical, and stump grinding

5. DETERMINE DEBRIS DISPOSAL AND REVEGETATION

5.1 Describe the debris disposal methods to be used and any special considerations.

Debris Disposal:

Chip

Mulch

Other - Stump grinding

5.2 List areas of reseeding or replanting (those areas not already described in steps 1, 2, or 3).

N/A

5.3 If not using native seed/plants, describe why.

N/A

5.4 Describe timing and any follow-up that will need to take place to ensure germination/success of seeding/planting.

N/A

6.0 DETERMINE MONITORING NEEDS

6.1 Describe the follow-up/monitoring cycle that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the vegetation control methods used.

Right of way is reviewed 1 -2 times per year to follow up with any additional high trees

6.2 Describe any follow-up or monitoring needed to determine if mitigation measures were effective.

Right of way is reviewed 1 - 2 times per year to follow up with any additional high trees

7. PREPARE APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

7.1 Describe any potential project impacts or project work that are different than those disclosed in the Transmission System Vegetation Management Program EIS. Describe how those differences impact natural resources and if the differences are “substantial”.

None

7.2 Is there a need for additional NEPA documentation (i.e. Forest Service requirement, Record of Decision, supplemental EIS)? If so, attach.

No